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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention is directed to a method for forming semiconductor devices and semiconductor device precursors having gradual slope contacts. The method for forming a semiconductor precursor includes the steps of: forming a layer of conductive material in a first layer; forming a layer of a hard mask material onto at least a portion of the first layer; etching the layer of hard mask material to expose a portion of the first layer; forming facets on the layer of hard mask material; and forming a via in the first layer such that the via extends through the first layer to expose at least a portion of the layer of conductive material.